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DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/CEN (BUDDEN) AND INL/LP (BOZZOLO)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/19/2017
TAGS: [KCRM](#) [SOCI](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [JM](#)
SUBJECT: JAMAICA'S ELECTION-YEAR VIOLENCE

REF: KINGSTON 00069

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission James T. Heg Reasons: 1.5(b) and (d)

1.(C) Summary: P/E Counselor and Acting NAS Director met for lunch with Deputy Commissioner Mark Shields of the Jamaica Constabulary Force on January 17. The purpose was to gain his perspective regarding prospects for an unusual level of violence in conjunction with elections this year. Shields observed that the situation was not alarming at this time. He is pursuing a couple of tactics to try to keep violence at a minimum. End Summary.

2.(C) Mark Shields, a UK national who is a veteran of the London Metropolitan Police Force, explained to emboffs that information currently available does not suggest that there is a need for alarm about potential election-year violence. While he indicated that the potential exists for this to be a more violent election than in 2002 (year of the last national election), the leaders of the PNP and JLP (Portia Miller-Simpson and Bruce Golding) have assured him that they are committed to peaceful elections. And, Shields said he has not hesitated to bring incidents to their immediate attention when violence has flared up. Shields related that, so far, violent skirmishes have primarily been between factions of the same political party.

3.(C) Although the Deputy Commissioner indicated distaste for having to do it, he has adopted the tactic of brokering peace agreements with unsavory characters like Paul Burke when violence erupts. He said that, the evening of January 16, serious shooting broke out in the Mountain View area of Kingston. During the incident a JDF soldier was wounded in the leg. Shields was at that moment (during lunch) arranging to meet with faction leaders as soon as he left the restaurant. He mentioned Danhai Williams as one of the parties involved. Comment: According to Radio Jamaica, gunfire continued the night of the 16th despite the presence of several teams of police and soldiers. As there were no subsequent reports of shooting in that area, emboffs assume that Shields succeeded. End comment.

4.(C) Comment: Paul Burke and Danhai Williams are notorious in Jamaica. Both are affiliated with the PNP. Burke has been involved in criminal activity for over 25 years and is believed to carry out the PNP's "dirty work" by ordering killings, extortions and intimidations of witnesses or "whistle-blowers" for them. Williams was a key witness in the trial over the Krawl killings a couple of years ago. It was claimed the murders were politically-motivate, extrajudicial killings. Williams allegedly was out of Jamaica during the trial in which Renato Adams (head of the police Flying Squad) had been charged. Williams was said to have provided Adams with "drop" weapons (to make it appear that the police acted in self-defense). Subsequently, Williams was granted immunity from failure to testify. It

appears that gangs of gunmen directed by politically affiliated "dons" or thugs are the root of the violence. And, those involved in the fighting are not necessarily resident in the location where the violence occurs. Shields suggested that the motive in many instances is intra-party rivalry for dominance in a particular area. In past years, shootings were the result of PNP and JLP gangs fighting each other for dominance over the electorate in a given area. End Comment.
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